

Double Bay Residents' Association

Protecting Sydney's Stylish Bayside Village

21 April 2023

Dear Member,

Congratulations to Kellie Sloane on her election as state member for Vacluse. We look forward to working with her, encouraging her to advocate in parliament on the issues which concern Double Bay residents. The principal issue is over-development which is having a major, negative impact on the village's ambiance, as well as on traffic congestion throughout the eastern suburbs.

We also congratulate the other three candidates – Karen Freyer, Margaret Merton and Dominic Wy Kanak – on their campaigns which highlighted the issues which concern residents. We were fortunate to have four candidates who empathised with residents and, if elected, were prepared to represent our interests effectively.

The candidates forum we arranged jointly with the Darling Point Society and the Queen Street and West Woollahra Association at the Double Bay Bowling Club attracted over 100 residents. Kellie Sloane wrote afterwards that it was 'the most professionally conducted debate of the campaign' – a tribute to Peter King whom we thank for chairing the forum.

Development

We are concerned by reports that Fortis, which is behind many of the developments in Double Bay and Edgecliff, may be having financial problems. If this is the case, it's possible that some of the empty sites which are scarring Double Bay could be affected. Fortis has also been chosen by the Council to redevelop the Cross Street car park – a project which has been shrouded in secrecy and to which many residents are opposed. We have written to the Council requesting information on the current status of projects in Double Bay and asking it to question Fortis on its financial position and ability to complete developments which have been approved.

We are also concerned by the Council's decision to cease advertising development applications (DAs) in the Wentworth Courier. While this may speed up assessments, residents whom the Council believes won't be affected by the development – and therefore aren't notified of the DA – may not be aware of it and able to comment. A retrograde step!

Significant development applications

49 and 51-53 Bay Street: The Woollahra Local Planning Panel considered yet another DA for a six-storey commercial building with two levels of basement parking at a public meeting yesterday, 20 April. The Council staff recommended refusal and several members living in the Chancellor and Cosmopolitan apartments, who would be most affected, spoke passionately against approval. On behalf of the DBRA, Malcolm Young, also spoke strongly against it. We are awaiting the panel's decision.

27-33 Knox Street: Like many residents, we submitted an objection to this DA for a six-storey building, 50% above the current four-storey zoning, on the north side of the street. If approved, it would block sunlight from Knox Street and be another blow to Double Bay's village character.

Bay Street enhancement

The Council has announced a plan to enhance the northern end of Bay Street, moving the turning circle 26 metres closer to William Street and creating a larger paved area outside the 18 Footers Club. The plan has merits, but regrettably was developed in a rush following limited consultation with residents. One consequence will be the loss of 10 parking spaces, further exacerbating Double Bay's parking problems, and there seems to have been little effort to retain the area's special features. Information can be found on the Council's website.

Crown Land Reserves

The Council has published draft plans of management for Crown Land in the municipality, with comments invited by 3rd April. Your association made a brief submission with a number of recommendations including:

- Heritage listing of parks, beaches and other open spaces;
- Retention of historical land use rights – e.g. the sailing club rigging area in Steyne Park;
- Consolidation of anomalous titles – e.g. Double Bay beach;
- More active water quality management at beaches;
- Setting a minimum ratio of open space to population; and
- Limiting light pollution due to its impact on local ecosystems.

The Council's Your Say Woollahra web page

Residents' views on various issues are sought in the **Your Say** section of the Council's website, and we recommend that you visit the site regularly to see if there is an issue on which you feel strongly and would like to comment. The more people who comment, the greater the likelihood that the Council will take residents' views into account when making decisions.

Current issues on which your views are invited are:

- Dog exercise areas: if you own a dog, you may want to comment on plans to introduce additional off-leash areas. (Comments needed by 26 April)
- Parklets (the outdoor restaurant seating that has replaced parking spots in Double Bay): what are your views on them? (Comments needed by 1 May)

ANZAC Day

The Mayor has invited DBRA members to attend the Council's wreath laying ceremony at the Steyne Park cenotaph at 9.00am on Tuesday 25 April.

DBRA's annual general meeting

This year's annual general meeting will be held at **Woollahra Library on Tuesday 23rd May** starting at 6.00pm. We hope as many members as possible will attend; we intend to invite our local councillors and other representatives, providing an opportunity for you to question them on issues that concern you.

We are keen to expand and strengthen our committee and hope members will consider joining it or recommending candidates who would be prepared to do so. Our aim is to maintain Double Bay as a

very special part of Sydney – an attractive place to live and to visit. If you would like to discuss how you could help, please contact me on the number below.

Best wishes,
Anthony Tregoning
President

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